

The Future of Our Beaches
Campaign to Promote Healthy Beaches and Inlets in North Carolina

Submitted by the North Carolina Coastal Federation
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Pressures to protect private oceanfront property from sea level rise, storms and erosion are overwhelming existing state laws, policies, regulations and leadership that have protected our public trust beaches for decades. This campaign seeks to maintain current safeguards for our beaches, while at the same time reaching out and enlisting the support of non-conventional partners to pursue longer-term solutions for maintaining healthy beaches for all citizens of North Carolina. Many of these solutions were identified by the Beach Management Summit organized by the federation in 2009. This is a long-term campaign that has to be waged in the NC General Assembly, in Congress, and with all the federal, state and local agencies that make decisions about the future of our beaches. Specific and critical benchmarks that can be accomplished during this short session of the NC General Assembly include:

1. Defeating or sidetracking legislative efforts to allow terminal groins in North Carolina.
2. Undermining local enthusiasm for terminal groins by better communicating the downsides of this tool: costs, permitting delays, lawsuits, uncertainties about benefits, and liabilities to sponsors.
3. Obtaining good coastal adaptation recommendations by the Legislative Study Commission on Climate Change that reflect the 2009 Beach Summit proposals.
4. Defeating or sidetracking legislative efforts to allow terminal groins in North Carolina.
5. Assuring that there are insufficient state appropriations to fund local efforts to build terminal groins in N.C.
6. Building support from Governor Perdue and her Administration to support a proactive agenda to protect our beaches.
7. Developing a future "Common Agenda" for the 2011-12 sessions of the N.C. General Assembly that includes a diverse group of non-traditional participants who are willing to come together to promote future policies that will protect beaches. The seeds of this pro-active agenda are contained in the 2009 Beach Summit recommendations.

Protecting North Carolina's public trust beaches is a priority for environmental groups across North Carolina, and this campaign will invite all those organizations to pursue coordinated strategies.